## Salem County Department of Health and Human Services

## COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS & HEALTH EDUCATION

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## **News Release**

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## **Positive Rabies Case in Elmer, New Jersey**

A positive rabies case has been confirmed by the Salem County Health Department following an incident that occurred on January 28, 2014 in Elmer. On this date, there was a fight between a raccoon and two barnyard cats. One cat was bit by the raccoon and the other cat could possibly have been bitten as well. The raccoon was sent to the lab for testing and a positive result was received.

The cats were up to date on their rabies vaccine and received a booster shot. They will be kept under observation to ensure they were not infected. The owner of the cats may have been exposed to the saliva of the raccoon. Because saliva is the way that rabies is spread, the Elmer resident has already begun post-exposure treatment. The Salem County Health Department advises residents to vaccinate all pets and avoid wild animals.

"This is another example of why vaccinating our pets is so important," said Freeholder Bob Vanderslice, Chairman of the Health and Human Services committee, "We can protect our pets from this virus, but we have to take action ahead of time."

Rabies clinics are going on now throughout Salem County. For information on clinic dates and times, go to SalemCountyNJ.gov/health/2014-rabies-clinics/.

"Every time we hear about another positive rabies case in Salem County we try to remind residents to avoid touching wild animals, especially those acting strangely. It is important that they call Animal Control to avoid coming into contact with the rabies virus themselves," said Freeholder Director Julie Acton.

For more information about rabies, go to CDC.gov/rabies or call the Health Department at 856-935-7510.

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